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for focusing the beams 5, 7 are formed as lenses. The device 1 according to the invention is connected over a bidirectional data bus 9 to a superordinate control unit (not shown) in the vehicle 10.

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In the claims:

Please add the following new claims:

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14. (New) The device of claim 1 wherein the control unit is operably associated with a windshield cleaning system of the vehicle such that the windshield cleaning system is activated when the control unit detects dirt on the windshield.

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15. (New) The device of claim 1 wherein the photodetector further comprises:  
a CCD image converter.

16. (New) The device of claim 2 wherein the light emitting diode is operable to emit optical rays having different wavelengths.

17. (New) The device of claim 2 wherein the light emitting diode is operable to emit optical rays having different intensities.

sub. C  
18. (New) The device of claim 11 wherein the light emitting diode is positioned such that the optical rays strike the windshield at a similar angle with respect to a driver's line of sight.

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